

Guys, take the lead in self-checks for testicular cancer

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Young men should become familiar with symptoms of testicular cancer

and know how to do self-exams, an expert says.

Though [testicular cancer](#) accounts for less than 1% of all male cancers in the United States, it typically occurs in men between the ages of 20 and 34. Cure rates are near 95%, especially when the [cancer](#) is detected early.

"Some men might be nervous or uncomfortable with approaching their doctors—or anyone—about the subject of testicular cancer," said Dr. Thomas Jang, associate chief of urologic oncology at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey in New Brunswick. "Not speaking up or waiting and hoping that a testicular mass will simply go away on its own is dangerous and can lead to cancer affecting other parts of the body."

Risk factors for testicular cancer include testicles not descending into the scrotum at birth and a family or personal history of the disease.

Regular self-exams for testicular cancer are easy, according to Jang.

"To self-exam, an individual should hold each testicle separately between the thumbs and forefingers of both hands and roll it gently, feeling for hard lumps or rounded masses, as well as changes in shape or size," he said in a Rutgers news release.

Jang noted that in some cases of advanced testicular cancer or cancer that has spread to other parts of the body, men may experience back or abdominal pain, coughing or unintentional weight loss.

"Any man who feels a testicular mass or has these symptoms should seek medical attention," Jang advised.

Most cases of testicular cancer, even advanced disease, can be cured with surgery, chemotherapy, radiation or a combination of these

treatments. In some men, monitoring may be appropriate after diagnosis.

After treatment and/or surgery, most patients return to their normal life, with the majority having normal sexual function and fertility, Jang said.

More information: The American Cancer Society has more on [testicular cancer](#).

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